

## THE EMERALD BRACELET

By Esmer Jennings.

It was not the intrinsic value of the gems that tempted Ellison. It was not the knowledge that each one of those shining things that stared at him with their unwinking eyes all day in the jewelry store was worth so many dollars. It was their eternal



"It's Only to Look at, Dear."

glitter. And there were so many of them!

There were diamond rings, with stones varying in size from little more than that of a pin's head to that of a bean. There were necklaces of gold, set with glittering rubies and sapphires. But, finest of all, was the Persimmon bracelet.

It had been bought from the Persimmon estate for \$200,000. It was a gleaming mass of diamonds and emeralds. A flawless emerald is the

rarest and most costly of gems. The bracelet was worth about as much as all the rest of the contents of Kahn's window together.

And James Clark, salesman, aged twenty-five, was earning only \$15 a week. Moreover, he was in love.

The sight of the prosperous purchasers, who flung away in ten minutes, each one, perhaps a half-year's salary on the \$15 basis, stung the young man to the quick. He saw nothing before him but long years of toilsome drudgery behind the counter, everlastingly fingering those glittering baubles.

"I'd like to see how Dolly would look with you around her wrist, my fine fellow!" he apostrophized the stone.

The thought became an obsession. And it would be so easy to take it home with him one night. The store closed at six; at five minutes before six the bracelet was removed and placed in the big safe by Cyrus Kahn. Then the rest of the window display was placed in the older safe. That was supposed to be burglar-proof, but the big safe, containing valuable papers, always contained the bracelet, for it was the last word in safe-making.

But—Ellison knew the combination. And he had learned it in the most foolish simple manner. It was simply because Cyrus Kahn spoke his thoughts aloud. He had spoken the combination number aloud every night and morning during Ellison's, three years of apprenticeship. At least, he had probably spoken it in the morning, but Ellison was not there to hear him. Kahn, an old-fashioned business man, arrived at eight to open the store in person, as his father had done when he owned the small beginnings of the big business. Ellison and the five other salesmen did not arrive for another half hour.

Only the preceding week Kahn had refused to increase Ellison's salary. His manner had been kindly enough,